

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/661,453

Applicant(s)

BROWN, C. PHILLIP

Examiner

Brian T. Pendleton

Art Unit

2615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to new application on 9/12/03.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-28.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 - * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-28 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art references, Marash et al, Helf et al, and Mauro do not disclose the combination of determining a set of frequency domain values created by a set of digital filters related to each other by a constant ratio of filter bandwidth to center frequency, obtaining a set of minimum magnitude frequency domain values over a time interval spanning multiple frames of time, and subtracting the set of minimum magnitude frequency domain values from an audio signal in the frequency domain for a particular frame of time, as required by independent claims 1, 8, 17, 19, 23, and 26. Marash et al teach a method for canceling noise comprising a noise processing unit 112 which has a noise estimation unit 212 shown in figures 1 and 2. The noise estimation unit 212 searches for a minimum magnitude value (see figure 3). Marash et al however do not teach nor suggest the use of a set of digital filters related to each other by a constant ratio of filter bandwidth to center frequency to determine a set of frequency domain values or subtracting the minimum magnitude frequency domain values from the audio signal 102 for a particular frame of time. Helf et al similarly disclose a noise reduction apparatus and method comprising a minimum signal estimator 22 used to estimate the background noise and subsequently modify the input signal 1 via attenuator 12. Helf et al do not disclose nor suggest the specific set of digital filters, just notch filter unit 4, and the subtraction unit. Mauro discloses sampling the input audio signal, converting the audio signal to a digital signal in the time domain (preprocessor 202), converting the digital signal in the time domain to the frequency domain (transform element 204), determine frequency domain values (channel energy estimator 206a),

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converting the spectrally subtracted audio signal to time domain (inverse transform element 226), and outputting the converted audio signal. Mauro does not teach the digital filters, obtaining a set of minimum magnitude frequency domain values or subtracting the set of minimum magnitude frequency domain values from the audio signal in the frequency domain for a particular frame of time.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian T. Pendleton whose telephone number is (571) 272-7527. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vivian Chin can be reached on (571) 272-7848. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Brian T. Pendleton
Primary Examiner
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btp